No. 15.

THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM.

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Each member can send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Members will be careful to write on only one side of the paper and to use black ink.

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For paragraphs under the word "Ans." the editor is personally responsible.

September, 1890.

QUESTION LXXI.

Is it intended to be conveyed, in answer to Question LXVIII, *that true Occultists and sincere Theosophists would countenance or practice any lawful arts of White Magic for pay?*

K. E. T.—I ask this because such would seem to be the purport of the answer; yet Jesus of Nazareth, no more than Buddha, ever claimed a fee for his wonderful works of healing. Why, then, should lesser lights of modern days exact money tribute for their often very unsuccessful feats of "mental" and "spiritual healing," so-called? The time and thought given by the practitioner of mental healing are almost *nil*, both in the acquirement and practise of his art; hence he does not seem, on the usual worldly considerations, at all entitled to the honorarium exacted by a member of a profession which, even in this country of bogus diplomas, it takes both time and money to acquire.

Ans.—Before answering the Question, it is needful to straighten out the confusions of thought all through the above. That the practitioners referred to gain their art at almost no out-

lay of time and thought may be a fact, but it *sounds* much like an assumption. Doubtless it would be denied by the really skilful ones, who are, indeed, the only ones worthy of consideration. If "often very unsuccessful" treatment vitiates the claim to a fee, why not in the case of the "orthodox" school as well as the others? Medicine is notoriously an empirical matter. "Gentlemen," said the great French Professor to his pupils, "the science of medicine which I am commissioned to teach you does not exist." If a fee is conceded after failures in a practise of guess-work and experimentation, one cannot well maintain the principle of pay only for success upon knowledge. The cases of Jesus and Buddha have imperfect analogy with physicians of any school. They were wandering teachers, not physicians at all, and one of them an ascetic. They had to live somehow, and, in fact, they lived upon alms. The treasurer of the former's band of disciples "had the bag, and bare what was put therein." (St. John XII, 6.) Buddha carried the wooden bowl. Both were supported by the community as prophets and thaumaturgists,—certainly not as able-bodied beggars. They did not "claim fees," but they accepted gifts. Besides, what about St. Paul, a veritable Adept? After he had laid his hands on the father of Publius and cured him, "others also which had diseases in the island came and were healed; who also honored us with many honors, and, when we departed, *they laded us with such things as were necessary.*" (Acts XXVIII, 10.) If so eminent an Adept accepted "necessary" things and even "lived of the Gospel" (I Cor. IX, 14), the "lesser lights of modern days" need not feel uneasy or mind gibes.

Now, there is another thing to be said. The FORUM is not an allopathist, or a homeopathist, or a mind-curist, and most assuredly not a "Christian-scientist,"—whatever that may mean. But it wishes fair-play to all schools, and particularly to recognize the truth which makes the capital of each. And, also, it wishes to be thoroughly practical and common-sense, to be led astray by no semblances, however beguiling, and to blink at no facts, however uncomfortable. In the matter of maintenance to "metaphysical" healers, there are three, and only three, solutions. The first is that such practitioners should be at once

emancipated from the need for clothes, food, and shelter,—which is obviously not the case. The second is that they should be supernaturally supplied,—which is no less obviously contrary to fact. The third is that, like all other practitioners, they should receive fees from patients. (Let it be only after cure, if you choose,—provided you insist on the same principle for all schools.) Herein the FORUM is but recognizing a state of things common to all healers, and declining to make distinctions as to what classes shall be entitled to pay and what shall not.

And now to answer the Question more directly. The term "White Magic" is somewhat indefinite, but we may take it to mean "the use of occult forces in Nature for beneficent purposes." The distinction between it and "Black Magic" would seem to be that the latter is used for *maleficent* purposes, the selfish ends of the practitioner being the most usual. Hence the *object* of the use determines the quality of the Magic. But pay need not be the object: it may be only the condition, and that merely because the practitioner cannot practice his art without support. A critic once objected to a subscription for Church missions on the ground that the water of life was free. "Yes," was the reply, "*but we must pay for the pitchers to carry it in.*" And this reply goes to the root of all such questions. The potencies of Nature are free to all of Nature's children. Herbs and roots and minerals may be had by anybody who chooses to take them; unseen currents and influences may be invoked by one man as freely as by another. Yet, as only trained skilfulness is able to prepare from free herbs the decoction or plaster needed for a complaint, and as that training and skilfulness, together with their subsequent use, are made possible only by the remuneration which the rest of the community, occupied in other fields, are glad to give; so the nature and application of the higher forces, free as are the forces, are ascertained only by those who have studied them, and they have studied and use them only because other men, busy in different spheres, supply the means of maintenance. The fact that Nature's curative agencies are free does not demonstrate that all who need those agencies know where to find them, or which to select, or how to apply it, any more than the fact that there

are medicinal springs fits a patient to decide whether he should go to Saratoga or Kissingen or Carlsbad. The suitability of a free spring has to be determined by a doctor who knows both the patient and the spring; and so the helpful use of an unseen force in Nature requires guidance from an expert. Both receive compensation because it is by their art that they support themselves.

For it is not to be supposed that the fine quality of a pursuit dispenses from the physical wants upon the supply of which life depends. A student of Divine mysteries, a preacher of righteousness, a self-abnegating philanthropist needs food and lodging as truly as does a day-laborer. In a world of beings living on a material plane and under material laws, all processes have to go on with full recognition of both. The water of life is undoubtedly free; yet we none the less must pay for the pitchers to carry it in. And so healers of the body through supraphysical means do not differ—except, perhaps, in the smaller size of their bills—from healers through the pharmacopœia, and must, so long as they remain in the flesh, be subject to its requirements, and their patients must supply those requirements on precisely the same principles as they supply their own.

W. Q. J.—My reply to this would be that the taking of pay for any act of "White Magic" is untheosophical and injurious to the taker. The example of all great men known to history or Scripture is against the taking of pay in such cases. Jesus would not take it, nor Apollonius, nor Buddha, although, if persons insisted, they were allowed to donate food or for food. Buddha depended upon voluntary contributions of food, and accepted the gift of a garden or park from a rich man for the use of the disciples, but not for himself. A "right means of livelihood" does not permit the practise of powers belonging to another plane than this for pay. If we have to starve unless we take pay for what the querist calls "arts of White Magic," then, I say, starve, and you will be the better off.

The accepting of pay at once takes away the character of White Magic from the act and makes it Black, for there is a selfish purpose in receiving the pay which no amount of argument or self-cheating can remove. There are many degrees of

"Black Magic," running all the way from effort to get money for food up to deliberate, conscious work for self alone. If one has the natural gift of healing and then takes pay for its use, he is cheating. This is wide apart from the practise of medicine, which you have to give effort, time, and money to acquire.

But if a natural healer or a "spiritual healer"—to use a most absurd term now in vogue in America—practises healing, and takes of alms only enough for sustenance, there is no Black Magic. But all such healers can ask themselves if they have made money, saved money, bought property, lived in luxury on the proceeds of their art or practice—or whatever they call it—and, if they have, then certainly they have "robbed the gods," who gave freely a power and compelled no pay. The "gods" see these things, and have a time and place when and where the stolen property has to be accounted for.

QUESTION LXXII.

How do Theosophists believe children should be taught regarding birth and death, and why one should do right?

Ans.—As Theosophists hold a conception of the world and life altogether at variance from that usually held, they must believe in a different *content* to education, but not necessarily in a different *method* or *principle*. The principle of education is that truth is to be imparted; the method is that it is to be imparted in such manner and to such degree as the young faculty can comprehend. Hence a Theosophist would use anecdote, illustration, pictures, games, kindergarten devices, any or all sagacious plans to make fact intelligible to a child, just as would any one else. For it must not be supposed that Theosophists, who enjoy so much more copious an insight into the world of being than do materialists or conventionalists, have vacated their claim to use, in common with their fellow-men, all that it contains. They are quite as anxious for improved educational processes and for the most skilful teachers and appliances as are other people. The divergence begins with the matter which is to be taught.

It is evident that the first conception, anyhow often present

to a child's mind, should be Reïncarnation. Karma, as accounting for it, comes next. These truths undoubtedly have their complexities, but it is entirely possible to make their simple outlines comprehensible by a child. Certainly there is nothing more difficult in this than that we are descended from and damned by a first Adam, and reborn into and rescued by a second. In fact, experience will probably show that the thought of life as a pilgrimage, and the assurance that our own conduct has decided and will decide its quality, are quite congenial ideas to children, all the more so because they are so reasonable and fair, not depending on authorities which are arbitrary or on arguments which are unintelligible. And if these two truths are thoroughly infused into the opening mind, their influence in regulating the whole present and after conduct cannot be overrated.

The doctrine of a Universal Life and our inherence as a part of it is not hard to instil. The very vitality of children predisposes them to it. They are in sympathy, too, with Nature and plants and animals, closer to living forces than their artificialized elders. Hence sympathetic dispositions and kindly impulses are the easier to educe, and as a department of education are invaluable.

From the truths of Karma, Reïncarnation, and the Universal Life flow the ethical considerations which can be made very lucid to a child. "I have not the toys and pleasures my playmate has because he used to do well and I did not," "If I hurt that dog I shall some day be hurt myself," "It is mean to be greedy and selfish,"—the essence of these reflections can be easily excited, and they are at the root of all ethics, for they mean Desert, Recompense, Duty.

That one should do right because it is right, and not merely because it is safer, may seem a conviction somewhat too abstract for a child, and yet not necessarily so. Children have conscience, and they have also a tenderness of feeling which assists conscience, for it makes more keen an appeal to them to know how they would feel under the treatment they are giving to others. Herein is touched the spring of altruism, for it puts them at once in another's place and makes them realize his experience. "How would you like that if it was done to you?" has

immediate effect on a child. And here again, the vivid consciousness of community in nature with all mankind is a lesson which cannot be learned too young, as it will shape all adult action.

All ordinary motives to right conduct are reënforced from the Theosophical treasury, since it contains so many more truths from which such motives spring. If Theosophy, then, is richer in both truths and motives than are other systems, there ought not to be more difficulty in making them apparent to the young. The more complex and recondite contents may well abide their time. The other systems have the advantage of long careers, and so of ample literary provision for the needs of all ages. Children's books of every description, moral, religious, and even scientific, abound. But Theosophy is just starting on its Western career, and as yet has had time to address itself only to adults. As it spreads and as Theosophic families multiply, and also as the range of Branch work expands, the demand for Theosophic literature for the young will cause production. We have the right to expect in time such a literature as varied and copious as, and incomparably richer than, that which now fills the magazines and story-books and Sunday-school libraries. Perhaps it is not out of place to say that the *Path* for August gives promise of one such volume about to be issued, and a hope of several more. That children are neither to be starved nor to be fed on trash is one of the certainties of the Theosophic future. And it cannot be accomplished too soon.

QUESTION LXXIII.

(1.) *Is there not a confusion involved in portions of the answers to Questions* 66 *and* 69 *with respect to Atma?*

(2.) *In what sense is the word "correspond" used in Theosophical writings and the works of Swedenborg? In the sense of "cause and effect," and that things never "correspond" unless this relation exists between them?*

W. Q. J.—(1.) There is no reference to Atma in Question 69, and hence no confusion. A reëxamination of answer to

Question 66 shows none. It is clearly stated there that there is but one principle—call it Atma—which incarnates, so to say, through its six vehicles; and at the end of the answer a private opinion is given that Atma does not incarnate except in the sense that it overshadows and illumines.

(2.) I presume the questioner refers to the use of the words "it corresponds," "there is a correspondence." This does not refer to cause and effect, but rather to similarity or likeness, as: "Good *corresponds* to light, and evil to darkness;" "Selfishness *corresponds* to frigidity and iciness, and generosity to heat." There is no relation of cause and effect between these, for generosity is not the effect of heat nor its cause, nor is the light the effect or cause of goodness. You are therefore essentially wrong in supposing the word "correspondence" is used to express cause and effect. An examination of a good dictionary discloses the meaning to be "fitness, agreement, proportion," hence "similarity." The questioner should study this word and obtain a clear understanding of its meaning and use, for if the conception of it remains so confused as the question indicates, many other errors will result. A more or less complete knowledge of *correspondences* gives the power to gain knowledge gradually from one plane to another.

QUESTION LXXIV.

In view of the condition of Astral Man stated by W. C. T. in FORUM *No. 9, Question 32, what was the effect of our civil war on the astral plane, and reflexively on ourselves?*

W. Q. J.—To answer this Question aright would require the powers of an Adept who could see into the astral light and measure the exact results. But sudden deaths in war are not the same in effect as the killing of a murderer or a wicked man who has violated the law. The men destroyed in battle are engaged in the moving of troops, the arrangement of batteries, firing of volleys, and using the sword. Their attention is almost wholly thus occupied, and when they are suddenly killed it is with this idea of present attack and defence fixed in their

nature. If we suppose them as lingering in the astral plane, then they will there continue the same actions which occupied them at the time of death. But the criminal, who has lead a criminal life, who is full of evil passions, and who steps off into the other world with a heart full of passion and revenge, will linger on the other plane full of those unsatisfied desires, and not overmastered, as is the warrior, by a single strong idea. The astral warrior confines himself to the repetition of attack and defence, while the criminal seeks to satisfy his revenge and bad instincts in general. These considerations seem to me to point out a difference. I do not pretend to answer the whole question, however, as to the effect of war acting from other planes.

QUESTION LXXV.

Is it a Theosophical duty to relieve every case of suffering indiscriminately?

Ans.—This has to be answered by first piercing down to principles.

Wherever there is inherent life—as everywhere throughout the organic world—the possibility of injury involves the provision for repair. In the vegetable kingdom, the frosting of a twig, the mutilation of a limb, the grazing of a bark causes a rally of all the vital powers to remove the damage. In the animal kingdom, that of both brutes and men, sickness or wounds or bruises are a call on Nature to concentrate her forces on the seat of injury that the poisonous matter be ejected, the weakened organ be built up, the fractured bone be healed. Pain shows that the natural order has been violated and that the tender places of the organism have been shocked. It is the summons to consciousness, informing of injury, invoking of remedy, enjoining to submission. It is not the evil, it is notice that there *is* an evil; it is not the disease to be treated, but a clue to where that disease should be sought.

From this two consequences follow. The first is that the real purpose of medical art is to cure the disease, not to remove the pain. Either for mere relief to suffering or to facili-

tate more thorough treatment, anæsthetics are rightly used; but in their use it is never forgotten that pain is but a symptom of disorder, and that the object is to heal the disorder, which healing itself annuls the symptom. The other consequence is that a true physician will refuse to remove pain if the agencies necessary deepen and strengthen the disease and thus ensure worse pain thereafter. It would be folly to save from suffering for a day, if thereby the patient was subjected to an increase of his malady—and thus to an increase of his suffering—for years. Nor could the charge of cruelty hold against a practitioner who, certain of results, refused to alleviate a temporary anguish at the cost of a permanent disease.

Let us now translate these principles into the moral sphere, and note if their application is not as demonstrable as in the sphere of physics. Here, too, we have the phenomena of injury, mutilation, and apparatus for repair. There is the violation of moral order, the consequent disorganization of moral tissue, the summons to the moral system for its powers towards recuperation. So, too, there is the phenomenon of pain, possibly of body as the result of excesses, possibly of soul in the form of conscience. As in the physical system, it is a symptom of disease, and, also, as there, it gives the clue to the part affected and so to the remedy.

But the analogy does not stop here. The two corollaries we noticed in the world of physics are just as true in the world of morals. Here, too, wise treatment is designed to remove the cause of suffering rather than the suffering; to dry up the source rather than the outflow. The moralist does not give opiates or emollients to conscience, but seeks to eradicate the fault which caused conscience to burn. And as a far-sighted physician, however tender, refuses to give immediate relief to pain if thereby are ensured a stronger disease and a longer recurrence of pain, so the moralist, however sympathetic, will not remove the suffering caused by evil if to do so will invigorate the evil and repeat the suffering.

The Theosophic duty to help a person depends, moreover, very largely upon whether the person has brought the trouble upon himself. It may be said, of course, that all trouble Kar-

mically is self-incurred, but there is evidently great difference between that due to conduct in prior incarnations, of which one can know nothing, and that which is the immediate consequence of obvious conduct in this. One cannot feel, or be expected to feel, much sympathy with sorrow which is the direct result of evil-doing, especially if the evil-doing has brought sorrow upon others. To relieve it might not only be, as has been said, to prevent the reformatory power of discipline, but would be, in effect, to bestow a reward upon misconduct, and thus be unjust in itself and tend to induce a repetition of misconduct. Hence, upon being confronted with a spectacle of suffering, the first question of a thinker is as to whether the suffering is the sufferer's own fault. Is the poverty the result of idleness, thriftlessness, extravagance; the disease, of wilfulness, carelessness, profligacy; the anxiety, of recklessness, folly, quick temper? If it is so, it might have been, should have been, avoided, and the sympathy cools. There is too much misery from inexperience or from the acts of others to allow of sentiment being expended upon that which is self-induced.

These distinctions are very obvious. The defaulting cashier has no title to help; the widow and orphans he has ruined, the very greatest. A persistent drunkard cannot expect his consequent penury to be relieved; his wretched children claim our full compassion. We do not exert ourselves to get a culprit out of jail; we would fail in no step to secure the release of the innocent. I may very well imperil my life to save the drowning victim of an accident; I should be wrong to endanger it to rescue a person attempting suicide. In short, the moral quality of a sufferer determines his moral claim, and true beneficence has to consider fact as well as sentiment.

Nor must it be forgotten that limitations to ability force discrimination upon us. No one has power to relieve all the distress he sees. He has to select certain cases and pass by others. If, then, he dispenses his charity to the unworthy, it must be at the expense of the worthy. If he is free-handed to the tramp and the idle and the dissipated, he will have nothing for the industrious and the afflicted.

When, therefore, the Theosophist feels an impulse to re-

lieve one in trouble, the question whether it is right to restrain it depends upon the prior questions whether the trouble has been self-induced, whether relief would or would not impair the disciplinary purpose of Nature, and whether there are more deserving cases which would be sacrificed if the relief was given. And if all these questions have to be answered in the affirmative, it could be only weakness in intelligence or character which would permit the consequence to be disregarded.

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Printed on the Aryan Press.